

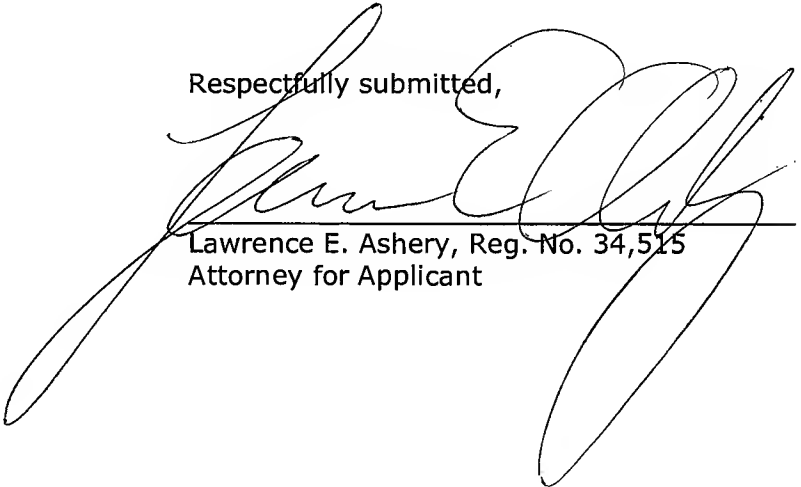
Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1, 3 and 5-20 are pending.

Claims 1, 3, 5-7 and 9-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murphy et al. (US 6,282,362) in view of Komatsu et al. (US 2004/0052502). Claim 8 had been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murphy et al. in view of Komatsu et al., in view Ohnuma (US 2003/0012549). These grounds for rejection are respectfully traversed because Komatsu et al. is not a proper prior art reference against the subject application. The subject application is a non-provisional application that claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/433,013 filed on December 13, 2002. Komatsu et al. is based on PCT Application PCT/JP02/09494 which was filed in the Japanese language on September 17, 2002, and which claims priority based upon foreign application JP 2001-284719 which was filed on September 19, 2001. The earliest date of publication is that of the foreign application (JP 2001-284719) of March 28, 2003, which is after the priority date of the subject application. Accordingly, Komatsu et al. is not a proper prior art reference against the subject application. Thus, claims 1, 3, 5-7 and 9-20 are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murphy et al. in view of Komatsu et al.; and claim 8 is not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murphy et al. in view of Komatsu et al., in view of Ohnuma.

In view of the arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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Dated: October 12, 2007

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